



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

****GUEST EDITORIAL****

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Thank a teacher

May 4-10 is Teacher Appreciation Week

By State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster

Wisconsin has a long and proud tradition of supporting our children and schools. In 1848, when Wisconsin became a state, our constitution required the state Legislature to provide for the establishment of district schools that would be free to all children between the ages of 4 and 20 years. We knew then, as we know now, that education is the foundation of our democracy. It is also clear that the success of our students and the quality of our schools rely on the skills of our caring teachers. During Teacher Appreciation Week, May 4-10, and as we approach the end of the 2007-08 school year, I hope everyone will join me in thanking our teachers.

The work of educating our children is not just a job, it is a calling. It is a calling that so many have answered, sparking excitement and love of learning in our children. Many of us had a teacher who inspired us, or guided us toward the path we would follow later in life. When we think back to our own school days, it is a special treasure to recall a teacher who had a positive impact on our lives.

Teachers throughout Wisconsin diligently serve our communities, inspiring our children to reach for the future and to dream. Everyday, our teachers are asked to solve problems that would baffle most of us. Daily, they are asked to work with far fewer resources than would be expected for a task of such importance. Our teachers understand that every student is special, that all students can learn, and that all students must succeed. Teachers know that their students' health and well-being, comfort, and feelings all have an impact on their learning. Because of this, teachers regularly go beyond the lesson plans and the classroom interactions to ensure that all of their students are able to flourish.

Our teachers have a knack for finding ways to reach students who others cannot reach. Their proudest moments stem from the transformation in their students—from those who start the school year

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struggling, behind, uninterested or even afraid – to a community of learners who are engaged, respectful and supportive of each other, and academically improving. Our teachers strive to create learning environments that instill responsible behavior through mutual respect, where individual differences are celebrated and team efforts are the norm, where students seek greater understanding of differing opinions, and where learning and knowledge are seen as power.

We have a shared responsibility to ensure that every child, no matter where they live in Wisconsin, receives a quality education. Our teachers, with their compassion and dedication, have a far-reaching impact on our students and our communities. Teachers shape the future by seeing the beauty in every child and lifting the hearts of our children up to their dreams. During Teacher Appreciation Week and throughout the year, please join me in thanking all of our teachers for what they do everyday for the students of Wisconsin.

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Elizabeth Burmaster is the elected state superintendent of public instruction.

NOTES: A high resolution photo of the state superintendent is available on the Department of Public Instruction “Media Contacts and Resources” webpage at <http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/vm-media.html>. This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008_80.pdf.